

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE  
PILOT PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

- Program grew out of a 1985 Forest Service study to measure organizational effectiveness, which showed that the Forest Service was not fostering entrepreneurship and creativity.

- Goal of program was to eliminate red tape and improve efficiency, productivity and employee morale.

- Four field units were selected to participate in the pilot program.

- Ground rules were established as follows:

- a) Proposals for change had to be legal, within the bounds of basic policy, and within constraints of the budget.

- b) Personnel ceilings and controls over staffing were eliminated within the four units.

- c) Units were allowed to work with a lump sum rather than numerous line item appropriations.

- d) Any savings accumulated could be allocated to other projects at the discretion of the unit.

- Authority and responsibility were pushed downward in the organization to the maximum extent practical.

- Employees in units were asked to identify barriers to productivity both within and outside Forest Service authority.

- From 70-80% of items identified as barriers to productivity were found to be within the control of the Forest Service.

- Pilot units increased their productivity an average of 15% in the first year of the study.

- In one pilot unit, 20% of the savings was distributed as a bonus shared equally with all employees.

- Service to customers improved despite reduced operating budgets.

- Employees used time saved through reduced bureaucracy/paperwork to undertake new projects.

- Most importantly, as noted by Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson, the "spirit" of the pilot test units is "bubbling over, and people are much more enthusiastic and excited about their jobs."